

REMARKS

The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated March 21, 2006. Claims 2 to 7, 9 to 15, and 17 are in the application, with Claims 9 and 17 being independent. Claims 1, 8, and 16 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, and 9 to 15 have been amended herein. Claim 17 has been newly added. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The specification was objected to for informalities. Applicants have amended the specification to attend to the matters raised in the objection. In this regard, Applicants verify the correctness of the term "several millimeters" in the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 13.

Claim 13 was objected to for an informality, which has been attended to by amendment.

Claims 8, 9, 14, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. These rejections are respectfully traversed, and are submitted to have been obviated by the amendments made to Claims 9, 14, and 15.

Claims 1 to 4 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,059,922 (Yamazaki). Claims 5 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Yamazaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,729,261 (Hongo). Claims 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Yamazaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,736,930 (Hongoh). Claims 8, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Yamazaki in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0193034 (Ota). Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Yamazaki in view of Japan 2-302507 (Tanaka). These rejections are respectfully traversed.


Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that Claims 9 and 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form and to address the § 112 rejections. New independent Claim 17 contains the subject matter of Claim 15 as amended to address the § 112 rejections.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from the independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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